

Bed Bugs

Identifying:

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Bed bugs are small, flat, wingless insects, approximately the size of an apple seed.

- Bed bugs feed on the blood of people and animals and have a painless bite.
- Bed bugs are not known to spread disease, and are not typically considered dangerous.
- Signs of bed bugs may include red, itchy bites arranged in a line or cluster on the skin.
- Bed bug infestations often occur around the areas where people sleep.
- Sources of bed bugs:
 - Baggage and clothing infested during travel
 - Infested apartment units – bed bugs can spread very easily and rapidly from unit to unit
 - Secondhand furniture and clothing
 - Laundromats
 - Public areas with upholstered seats including, but not limited to, public transport, movie theatres, libraries, and hospitals

Preventing:

- Avoid bringing mattresses, box springs, bed frames or furniture found on the street into your home.
- Check all used/rented furniture for bed bugs.
- When traveling, inspect your bed area for bed bugs.
- If you think you have come into contact with bed bugs, wash and dry clothing at the highest setting possible or store items in a sealed plastic bag until you are able to wash and dry them.
- Limit personal belongings when spending time in areas where bed bugs are more likely to be present.

Reporting:

- Bed bugs in public areas: If you find bed bugs in a public area contact the South Dakota Department of Health (605-773-4945) or your local health department.
- Bed bugs in rental spaces:
 - If you find bed bugs in your apartment or rental space, it is the responsibility of the landlord to proceed with extermination. Report the bed bugs immediately to your landlord.
 - If the landlord can prove that the bed bugs were brought in by the tenant, the tenant can be charged for extermination.

Treating:

Bed bugs can be challenging to get rid of and often require several attempts to treat. Managing the pests can take weeks to months depending on the nature and extent of the infestation. Once bed bugs have been identified there are a number of treatment options:

- Hire a Professional – Professional treatments, although expensive, are typically very effective in eliminating bed bugs. The South Dakota Better Business Bureau offers information on trustworthy pest control professionals.

- Treat bed bugs yourself – There are a number of do-it-yourself treatment options including:
 - Reducing by hand
 - Heat Treatment
 - Cold Treatment
 - Utilizing Chemicals

For more information, call 211 or search our online database:

- www.helplinecenter.org/211database
 - Use the following keyword search terms:
 - Bed Bug Control

Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Bed Bug FAQs: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/bedbugs/faqs.html>
- City of Sioux Falls Health Department: Bed Bug Information: <https://www.siouxfalls.org/health/public-health/vector-bedbug-control>
- South Dakota Better Business Bureau: https://www.bbb.org/search?city=sioux-falls&filter_accredited=1&find_country=USA&find_entity=60650-000&find_id=4
- South Dakota Consumer Protection: Landlord-Tenant Booklet: <https://consumer.sd.gov/resources.aspx>
- South Dakota Department of Health: <https://doh.sd.gov/diseases/infectious/diseasefacts/bed-bugs.aspx>
- United States Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/bedbugs>

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